The Messenger

Washington State Patrol

WELCOME
Submitted by Jo Williams

Oh how time flies! Hello again and welcome to the February 2010 edition of 'The MESSENGER'.

'The MESSENGER' articles focus on civil applicant fingerprint based and name and date of birth background check submissions. With this publication it is our hope to answer any question our stakeholders and users may have on the background check process.

Also in this issue there is some very important information concerning civil applicant submissions to the FBI.

If you have a question about any articles published in this newsletter or on background check information, please call or email Jo Williams at
(360) 534-2165 or jo.williams@wsp.wa.gov.

Helpful Tips on Securing Fingerprint Cards and Verifying Identity of Applicant
Submitted by LaToya Anderson & Cynthia David

There has been an increase in the number of requests for fingerprint based background checks for non-criminal justice purposes. Because of this increase in demand we want to provide you with some helpful guidelines to assist in maintaining your chain of custody of the fingerprint card as well as information on how to establish an applicant verification program.

The following information provides a guide to developing a chain of custody process:

- Establish a procedure in handling and processing fingerprints for both mailed in and electronic submissions.

- Establish a manual or electronic log book to track all fingerprinting events performed by agency technician.

- Document the type of identification used by the applicant (i.e. Driver's License, Military ID, etc).

- By inserting fingerprint cards into a sealed envelope, this will help secure custody for submitting the fingerprint card to WSP for processing.

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- Establish a form which lists the following information:
    - Date of fingerprinting
    - Reason for fingerprinting
    - Printed name of applicant
    - Signature and/or identification number of fingerprinting technician
    - Name of fingerprinting technician's supervisor and supervisor's signature
    - Name and physical address of agency to receive fingerprints
    - Type of fingerprint capture and applicant disclosure information.

Agencies may choose to establish an applicant verification program to define and document policy, procedures and best practices for fingerprinting. Below are some suggestions in creating an applicant verification program:

- Define and document policy, procedure, and best practices. Know what is accomplished and how it is performed.

- Fingerprint technician should be trained to capture fingerprints. In addition, technician should be able to recognize valid sources of identification to confirm the identity of the applicant.

- Applicant should provide a government issued valid photo identification card. Some examples of valid identification are: Drivers License, State Identification Card, Passport, and US Active Duty/Retiree/Reservist Military Identification.

- Develop a procedure for when the documentation does not support the applicant claim of identity.

For more information on developing a chain of custody process and establishing an applicant verification program, visit the National Crime Prevention and Privacy Compact Council website at www.fbi.gov/hq/cjisd/web%20page/cc.htm

Reference include excerpts from the Identity Verification Program Guide prepared by the National Crime Prevention and Privacy Compact Council.

Why Return All Rejected Fingerprint Cards with the New Card?
Submitted by Lourdes Aspiras

Listed below are a few reasons why it is important to return all rejected fingerprint cards with the new resubmitted fingerprint card:

1. If the applicant or agency requesting the fingerprint background search submit a new card without the rejected card attached, there is a possibility the agency will be billed a second time for the same applicant or the fingerprint card may be rejected back for a fee and delay the process.

2. It is also good to have the rejected cards attached in case the information on the new card is not complete. Quite often the new cards are not completed properly; therefore the Fiscal staff can obtain the information off of the rejected cards instead of rejecting it back to the agency which will delay processing of the fingerprint submission.

3. Fingerprint Technicians review the rejected cards as well as the new card to determine if better prints are even possible. If the technician does not have the rejected prints available to compare to the resubmitted prints there is no point of reference and the new card may be rejected again for poor print quality.

If you have questions on applicant fingerprint submissions either by mail or live- scan, please contact Lynette Brown, Background Check Fiscal Unit Supervisor at
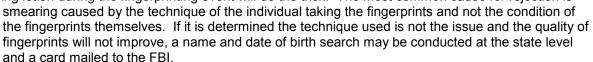(360) 534-2109 or by email at lynette.brown@wsp.wa.gov.

A Little Bit of Lotion and a Whole Lot of Patience
Submitted by Bambi Owens-White

The Fingerprint Technicians of the Washington State Patrol Criminal Records Division (CRD) Tenprint Unit process thousands of applicant and criminal fingerprints a day which means, we see it all. Processing fingerprint cards is an interpretive job and part of the process is determining whether a card should be rejected. As subject matter experts, Fingerprint Technicians in the Tenprint Unit take many factors into consideration before stamping "Reject" on the back of a card:

- Does the Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) see enough detail to accurately search these fingerprints against the data base? Or is the quality so poor the search could miss a "Match" candidate?
- Is the poor quality due to the technique used by the printer, or does there appear to be a skin condition?
- What is the age of the applicant who was printed?
- Has the applicant been printed multiple times? If so, do those prints appear in the same condition?
- Did the printing technician utilize retabs or lotion?
- What do the slap prints look like compared to the rolled images? Are the images obviously smeared?

Only after asking these and other questions can the technician make the determination for rejection and prepare a reject slip to be attached to the back of the fingerprint card. Taking note of the circled numbers on the front or the suggestions typed on the back of a rejection slip could improve the quality of rolled fingerprints for the applicant. Most of the time, simply using lotion during the fingerprinting event will do the trick. The most common cause for rejection is smearing caused by the technique of the individual taking the fingerprints and not the condition of the fingerprints themselves. If it is determined the technique used is not the issue and the quality of fingerprints will not improve, a name and date of birth search may be conducted at the state level and a card mailed to the FBI.

Here at the CRD Tenprint Unit, we find that Corn Huskers is a great moisturizer and ridge builder in one. It is non-greasy and can instantly help produce better quality fingerprints. If an applicant has particularly dry, worn ridges, take a paper towel and draw a line of lotion down the center of the paper towel. Taking each individual finger, using the paper towel with minor pressure, massage or "milk" the tips of the fingers to plump up and add needed moisture to the ridge quality. Also, retabs are a vital tool to for anyone who rolls fingerprints in ink. Not only do they cover mistakes, but are a great way to add ridge quality to any fingerprint.

For individuals who have moist hands, use alcohol wipes. It is imperative that the person rolling the prints create the driest fingers possible for this person. Turn on a fan if available. Having a fan so the applicant can place their hand in front of it is a great way to keep hands as dry as possible. Place a stack of alcohol wipes and paper towels near for easy access. If a person has extremely sweaty hands, wipe each finger individually and print as soon as possible before moisture returns to the finger tips.

Many applicants are applying for jobs and fingerprint rejects may hinder their application process. It is my experience that an applicant will follow any direction you give or endure any trick you try in the hope they will not be rejected

A Warm Welcome
Submitted by Beth Marcoe

On December 16, 2009, the Criminal Records Division welcomed three new Fingerprint Technicians to the Tenprint Unit.

A warm welcome to Robert Lackey, Kathryn Martin, and Brian Ramsdell. These three new Fingerprint technicians are in the first few months of an intensive 6 to 12 month training program. To date, they have learned the Henry Formula, Henry Classification and NCIC Classification. In addition, they have attended the mandatory 40 hour basic fingerprint classification and comparison class taught by a Western Identification Network (WIN) trainer.

The Tenprint fingerprint training is extensive and includes learning Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) Classifications, manual fingerprint comparisons, fingerprinting (using the ink and lives-can methods), how to perform AFIS Quality Control, and AFIS Tenprint Inquiry as well as numerous work processes in the unit.

Every new Fingerprint technician must meet accuracy standards of each job task before being released to learn another job task. Robert, Kathryn and Brian are all doing very well and are a great addition to our very busy unit!

Washington Access to Criminal History (WATCH)
Duplicate Searches
Submitted by Tina Marshall

The WATCH/Customer Service team developed a '**Helpful Tips'** list to assist WATCH website users to reduce or eliminate adjustments to their billing invoice for duplicate searches after the invoice has been submitted for payment. By following the recommendations on the list, WATCH user's would be enabled to correct duplicate search billing. In addition,   processing time for WATCH user's and WSP Background Check Unit staff would be reduced and would simplify the billing process for all involved.

When a WATCH account user enters a duplicate search for the same person they should contact WATCH customer service and provide the duplicate search information prior to the end of the month. The following information is needed:

- Account number
- User name
- Date search was conducted
- Names that were searched multiple times or alias names
- List of duplicate names that need to be voided

HELPFUL TIPS:

When retrieving results from the WATCH inbox, always check for duplicate results!
- If there is more than one entry for a name, it indicates the name was searched more than once.

Occasionally when the system goes down, this will result in multiple searches for the same person. When a WATCH user enters a name and date of birth and nothing happens, the WATCH user re-enters the same name and date of birth, resulting in a duplicate search. These duplicate searches will be in the WATCH users inbox.

The Primary Administrator and Administrators on the WATCH account have access to the 'Account Transaction Details Report' located in 'View Reports.'
- This report provides a list of all names searched by month
- It is recommended to review this report prior to end of month to eliminate duplicate searches that may be done by the same user or two different users in the same day
- Searches done on a different day for the same person is not considered a duplicate search

Special Note: Please contact WATCH customer service prior to making any adjustments on invoices. You may contact WATCH customer service at (360) 534-2000 option 2 or email watch.help@wsp.wa.gov

Invoice adjustments will be considered on a case by case basis. Charges may not always be adjusted.

FBI CORNER
Excerpts from CJIS letter dated February 5, 2010
Submitted by Jo Williams

Information has been received in a letter dated February 5, 2010 from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Criminal Justice Information Services Division (CJIS) concerning name-based searches and fingerprint submissions for the 2010 Census. The CJIS Division anticipates processing 484,000 noncriminal justice fingerprint submissions from the U.S. Census Bureau over a three day period in April 2010.

In order for the CJIS Division to meet the deadline in processing the Census Bureau fingerprints, Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System (IAFIS) capacity issues are being addressed and personnel resources will be adjusted as needed. In preparation for the submission of the extremely high volume of fingerprints from the U.S. Census Bureau, IAFIS contributors are requested to <u>suspend</u> all noncriminal justice fingerprints during April 28 – May 3, 2010. It will take approximately two weeks to complete processing the backlog of fingerprints for all contributors. The CJIS Division requests that contributors <u>gradually</u> resume submitting noncriminal justice fingerprints beginning May 4, 2010, in order to prevent further delays in applicant fingerprint processing. At this time, the CJIS Division anticipates that fingerprints submitted for criminal justice purposes will not be affected.

As Washington State Patrol (WSP) receives information on the noncriminal justice submissions during this time period we will update you. WSP will be contacting all law enforcement and state agencies with any civil applicant submission changes. If you have questions prior to an update, please contact Jo Williams at (360) 534-2165 or jo.williams@wsp.wa.gov.